

PIÑATAS HAUNT THE HOLIDAYS

Piñatas haunt the holidays
donkey-shaped or chubby Santas. Obligatory
feeds of beans and franks. The whine of
countless raindrops in churchyards.

Goddamn wind has no respect. Brute
insensitive, blows the tarp off the Packard
shedding her poor rusty body
nude for the rain's rude inspection.

I can't concentrate. Too many
emotional details vying for my attention. Must
withdraw. Get out of this negative mode of thought.

Ten pitchers of beer later, careening 80 miles
an hour down illegal black night roads, radio too
loud, it becomes clear: I've got a bad attitude.
Cannot live joyfully without living with joy. You
can't have quality output without quality input.

A quiet Sunday afternoon, kids babysat, we
go to the walk-in movies to see Barry Lyndon.
Slow-paced, like a series of paintings. Amoral
message: he lived, loved, and died. Or
something like that.

OTHER MEN GOBBLE STEAK

Other men gobble steak from glossy menus.
They dribble fresh perked coffee
onto starch stiff cuffs, pour cream and stir
sweet white sugar cubes. Tinkling silverware
beside sunny windows, they read bold newspapers,
crinkled and crisp as tossed salads
in coffeeshops, diners, cafes, taverns,
grills, bars, hole-in-the-wall sandwich shops

or else chew pattymelts yellow as checker
cabs. They lure pink sweated secretaries
(22 years old and perfect) out to lunch,
vague suggestions of afternoon love
on their garlic sullied breath.

Other men murder the lunch hour.